

S. M. Miller

THE

Religious Monitor, OR EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION, AS SET FORTH IN THE FORMULARIES OF THE WESTMINSTER DIVINES, AND OF THE CHURCHES IN HOLLAND.

NO. 12.

MAY, 1828.

VOL. IV.

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Hold fast the form of sound words.

II. TIM. i. 13.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

JUDE, 4.

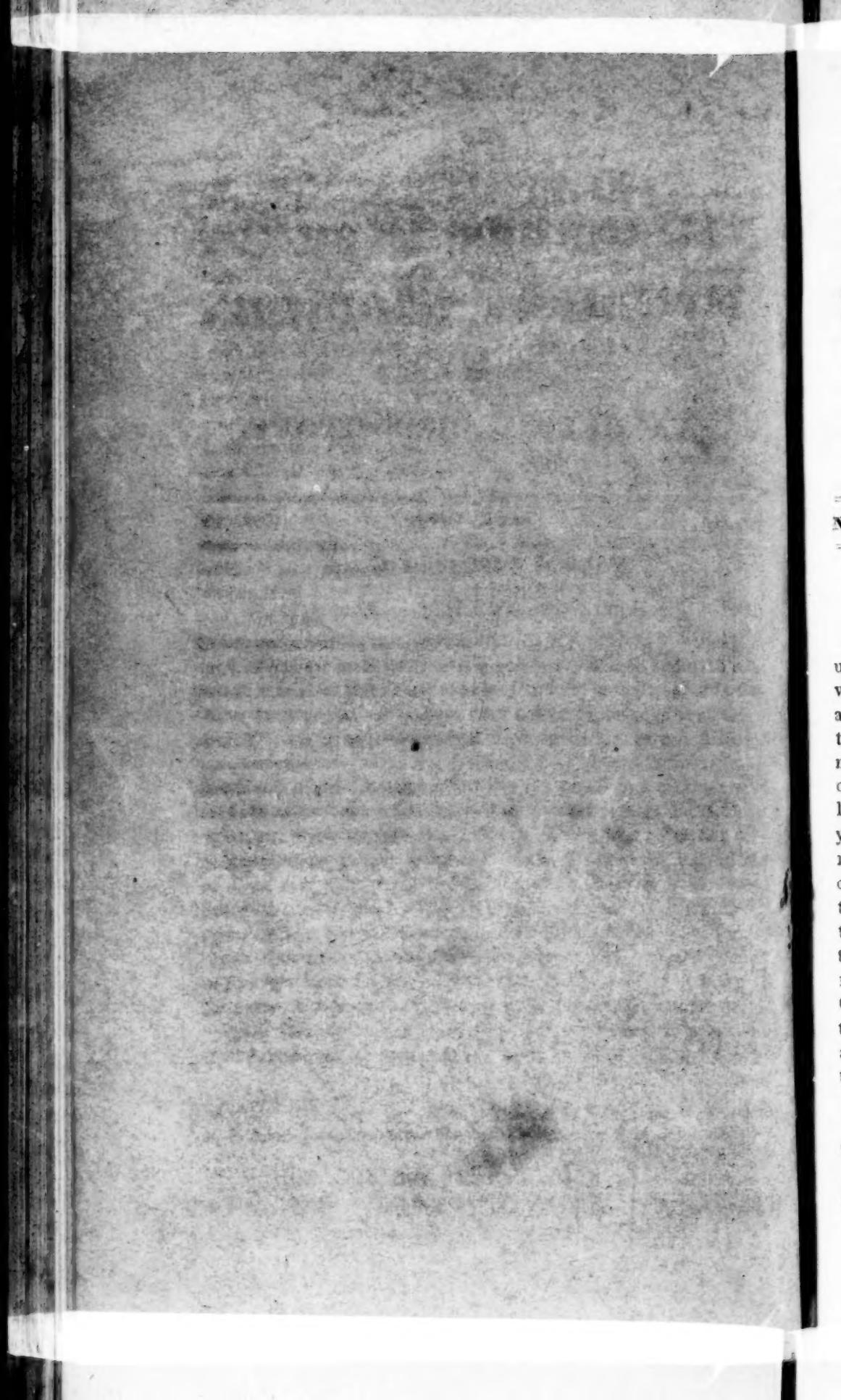
Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

JER. vi. 16.

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MAY, 1828.

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Original Communications.

To the Editor of the Religious Monitor.

DEAR SIR—I send you the following remarks on the design and uses of infant baptism, and beg you to give them a place in your valuable magazine. A circumstance which fell under my notice a few days ago, but in which your readers are not generally interested, led me to believe that the knowledge of many church members in reference to this subject is neither so extensive, nor of so definite a character, as it is to be desired. From this I was led to think that something like what is herewith submitted to your readers, might be useful. There is scarcely any thing original in the following paper. It consists for the most part of observations made by different authors that I have met with in the course of my reading; but the works from which they are taken, or by which they were suggested, are not always mentioned, because not accurately remembered. Although I am no great controversialist, yet as I have some knowledge of the Greek tongue, if you can spare a page or two, I may on some future occasion send you a few remarks on the word BAPTIZO—a word foolishly made of great consequence in the Baptist controversy. I am your obed't. serv't. A.

ON THE DESIGN AND USES OF INFANT BAPTISM.

“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God.” Mark x. 14.

It is observed by a judicious writer, that to take notice of little children is an indication of a kind and tender heart. Such a

disposition was often manifested by our blessed Lord. When little children were brought to him, he received them graciously, and when his disciples rebuked those that brought them, as performing either an unnecessary, a troublesome, or a useless service, Jesus was much displeased at their conduct, commanded the infant children to be brought to him, and intimated to those that stood by, that he admitted such into his kingdom.

On reviewing this transaction, it has occurred to me, that it is one of the most interesting sights to be witnessed in an assembled congregation of professing Christians, to behold parents presenting their infant children to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. There is in our country a numerous body of professing Christians, who deny both the Scriptural authority and validity of infant baptism; and I cannot help thinking that their conduct in refusing baptism to the infant children of the members of the visible church, bears a striking resemblance to that of the disciples, when they rebuked those that brought young children to Jesus, and with which he was much displeased.

It is perfectly obvious from this passage, as well as from many other parts of Scripture, that little children are capable of being benefited by the blessing of Christ. From this it seems but reasonable to infer, that they ought to be dedicated to him, and publicly brought into his church to receive his blessing. For it ought to be remembered that without this, baptism is merely a ceremony, and that it is only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit, that the sacraments become effectual means of salvation.* It is not my intention to trouble you at present with the often repeated and unanswerable, or, to say the least unanswered arguments†, which prove the Scriptural authority and validity of infant baptism, but shortly to point out its design and uses. To this I have been led by noticing some statements in the writings of some Baptists, representing infant baptism as a useless and unmeaning ceremony—"a cause that produces no effect"—"a means connected with no end," and "a tree that bears no fruit." Here it ought to be remembered, that if it can be proved that infant baptism is a divine institution, then it will follow that the observance of it is an indispensahle duty, even

* See Shorter Catechism, Quest. 91.

† The reasoning of the Baptists against infant baptism is altogether sophistical. Their reasoning, and the passages of Scripture which they produce, indeed clearly prove the necessity of a profession of faith to the baptism of adults, which is not disputed; but the reader is reminded that to prove adult baptism is a very different thing from disproving infant baptism. Unitarians reason in the same way when they produce passages of Scripture to prove that Christ is not God, and which only prove that he is Man; as if to prove his humanity were to disprove his Divinity, which is a very different thing.

although we might not be able to point out any immediate benefit arising from it. At the same time it is readily admitted, that it is but reasonable to suppose, that there ought to be some apparent use in whatever an infinitely wise and holy God may have enjoined, and it is not difficult to point out some very important uses of infant baptism. Before, however, proceeding to consider these uses, it may be profitable to notice the meaning of the rite itself. The emblematical signification of baptism, is seen in the purifying nature of the water employed in its administration. This is proved from the numerous passages of Scripture, where there is any reference to the meaning of baptism. Thus it is said Acts xxii. 16. "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." And Eph. v. 25, 26. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." From the allusion made to baptism in these and many other passages, it is obvious that it is chiefly intended to represent spiritual purification. The cleansing virtue of water denotes the removal of sin in its guilt and pollution. To this the reader's attention ought to be particularly directed, because many Baptist writers have placed the symbolical meaning of baptism, not in the cleansing nature of the element, but in the manner in which it is applied.

The passages of Scripture by which they attempt to support their opinion, are the two following Rom. vi. 3, 4. "Know ye not that so many of us, as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Col. ii. 12. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." The generality of Baptists have given it as their opinion, that in these passages there is an obvious reference to baptism by immersion, or by burying under water." The baptized person's communion with Christ in his death and burial, is represented by being raised out of the water. But, on reflection, the judicious reader will easily be convinced that it is altogether incorrect to speak of baptism exhibiting the death of Christ. Surely there is no resemblance to the crucifixion of Christ in the immersion of a person under water. Neither can the immersion of a person under water and again raising him out of it, be justly said to bear any distinct resemblance to the burial and resurrection of Christ.* Besides all

* I allow that the mind may easily habituate itself to the idea of a person's being let down under the water, and again raised out of it, bearing a resem-

this, any reference to the mode of baptism is no way necessary to a proper, easy and correct understanding of these passages. To be "baptized into Christ" is to be baptized into the faith of his divine mission, character and work, as the true Messiah. To be "baptized into his death" is to be baptized into the faith, that he died as our surety and substitute to atone for the sins of his people. And to be "baptized into his death," is to be "buried with him," that is, by being baptized into the faith of his death, as the death of our surety, we become partakers with him in it, insomuch that we are said to be buried with him, intimating a continued death unto sin. For by a divine constitution, Christ sustained the persons of all the elect, so that they are accounted one with him, and are said to have died in his death, and to have been raised again in his resurrection.* The fact is, that to be dead with Christ, and to be buried with him, mean the same thing, as will be seen by consulting the 8th verse. "Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." The only perceivable difference is, that the Apostle speaks of being buried with Christ, in order to inculcate more emphatically the duty of walking in newness of life. The plain meaning of the whole passage, then, is simply this: Since in our being baptized into Christ we are baptized into the faith of his death, as the death of our surety, we may be viewed as partaking with him in his death, and therefore also being buried with him, to the end that we should rise with him in a spiritual resemblance to his resurrection, and that we should walk in newness of life. From this view of the passage, which I believe to be correct, and which is confirmed by some of the best authorities, it will appear that the Apostle's reasoning has no connexion whatever with the mode

blance to a person's being let down into the earth, and again raised out of it. But surely it requires a great stretch of fancy to discover any great resemblance between a person's being let down into the water and raised out of it, and a body carried into a tomb hewn out of a rock, by a lateral door, and again reviving and coming forth from the tomb by the same door, which were the real circumstances of our Lord's burial and resurrection.

* Why this burying in baptism should so much as allude to any custom of dipping under water in baptism, any more than our baptismal crucifixion and death should have any such references, I confess, I cannot see. It is plain it is not the sign, but the thing signified, that the Apostle here calls being buried with Christ.—M. Henry in loc. The design of the Apostle in the text and context is obviously to shew from the death and resurrection of Christ, the obligation thereby laid upon Christians to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. I therefore prefer the view of the passage given above, because it represents our being dead with Christ, and our being buried with him as substantially the same. Indeed it seems strange to me that any other view should ever have been given of the passage. The Apostle obviously introduces the fact of our being "buried with him" as an inference from what he had just advanced, and not as containing any new idea that was not included in the foregoing statement. "Know ye not that as many as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore," &c.

of baptism. The meaning turns entirely on the baptism spoken of, being into the faith of Christ's death. This being the case, it makes no difference to the argument of the Apostle, whether we suppose the baptism to have been by sprinkling or immersion or any other way.

These observations apply with still greater force to Col. ii. 12. and therefore there is no need to offer any remarks upon that text. It is presumed that those which have already been made, are sufficient to shew that the symbolical meaning of baptism, is not to be found either in the quantity of water made use of, or in the mode of its application, but in the cleansing qualities of the water itself. And this is a matter of very considerable importance, because it has some bearing on the practical use of the ordinance itself.

I now proceed to consider the uses of infant baptism. These are of two kinds. This ordinance may be regarded as a standing attestation of some of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, or it may be viewed as designed to keep upon the minds of gospel worshippers the constant remembrance of highly important duties, with the obligation to perform them.

I. Infant baptism may be regarded as a permanent and visible memorial of important and fundamental truths.

Christian baptism, whether administered to infants or to persons of more mature years, obviously supposes an acknowledgment of guilt and pollution—the necessity of being purified from them, and that the means provided for this purification are the blood and Spirit of Christ. On these general views it is not necessary to dwell, because I believe they are common to Baptists with ourselves. But there are other, and no less important truths emblematically taught, by the administration of Christian baptism to infants; and to these I wish to call the attention of the reader. And

1. Infant baptism is a permanent memorial of original sin, exhibiting the important truth, that the pollution of our nature is not merely contracted but inherent. Every witness of the baptism of an infant child, is thereby put in mind that we are “shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin.” This is a truth of the greatest moment, and to unscriptural notions respecting it, can be traced many of the grossest perversions of the gospel. And as this doctrine is of great relative importance in the system of revealed truth, so it is of great benefit to us that an abiding sense of it should be kept upon our minds. Now the baptism of every child ought to bring it fresh to our recollection, and impress it more deeply on our hearts. It is readily admitted that many wit-

ness the administration of infant baptism without making this improvement of it. This, however, does not arise from any defect in the ordinance; but from their own thoughtlessness and stupidity; just as many hear the gospel of salvation, without deriving any benefit from it. For surely it teaches most plainly that children are the subjects of pollution from the womb, and that they need pardon and purification, that they may be received into heaven. The exhibition of these truths is of the greatest importance to all, and especially to parents, in determining the principles in which their children ought to be instructed. An ordinance designed and calculated to impress such truths upon the mind, cannot be regarded as useless.

2. Another important truth symbolically taught by infant baptism is, that little children are capable of being the subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and of sharing in its blessings. It is not necessary to enter into an argument to prove this, because Baptists admit that they were pronounced by Christ himself to be visible subjects of his kingdom. Mark x. 14. But if it be admitted on all hands, that infant children may be subjects of Christ's kingdom, and that they have been so pronounced by Christ himself, it is surely most consistent with this, that they should be admitted to baptism. This is, in fact, no more than the application of the sign to those pronounced by the Lord, to be capable of the thing signified by it. On the contrary, it is a glaring inconsistency to admit, as Baptists do, that infants are capable of being the subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and yet to deny them the ordinance which signifies and seals the peculiar blessings of that kingdom. It is vain for them to urge that infants cannot believe, and that faith is necessary to baptism, of which it is the profession. For if this reasoning were correct, it would exclude infants from salvation as effectually as from baptism. The whole force of the reasoning of the Baptists is concentrated in this one point. Believing, say they, is necessary to baptism, and as infants cannot believe, therefore they ought not to be baptized. Now, it may be affirmed with equal truth that faith is necessary to salvation; and, as infants cannot believe, therefore they cannot be saved. Every unprejudiced person who is acquainted with his Bible, will allow that there is just as much truth in the one of these assertions as in the other. But the fact is, that neither the one nor the other of them is true, when applied to infant children. The passage referred to, (Mark xvi. 15, 16. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned,") obviously applies to man,

kind in general, to whom the gospel could be preached, that is to persons capable of hearing and understanding what was preached. And we most cordially agree with the Baptists so far as this text or any other will permit us, and that is just thus far, viz. that adults out of the visible church ought not to be baptized till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him, but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.

From these observations it would appear that the children of professing Christians ought to be regarded as disciples. A disciple is a learner, and if parents do their duty and teach their children as they ought, then they are disciples. No one can say how soon the Holy Spirit may begin his secret and saving work in the souls of children brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and who are the subjects of believing prayer. It is true that in children we are not to look for the same attainments that may reasonably be expected in those who are of full age; but they may be babes in Christ Jesus—the lambs of the flock under the care of the good Shepherd.

3. Another momentous truth symbolically taught by infant baptism is, that the blessings of salvation are bestowed freely. An infant child can do nothing to merit heaven, and therefore the blessings which it receives, it receives gratuitously, and not as the reward of obedience, nor in the way of self-righteousness. So saith Christ must it be with you, if ye will enter into my kingdom; and “whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Mark x. 15. This was probably designed to rebuke the spiritual pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisees; but there is no doubt that it is levelled at the Pharisees of all succeeding ages, and shews very clearly, that he who will receive the kingdom of God, must receive it on the same terms as an infant child—not for his merit, nor his faith, nor his repentance, nor his obedience, as if any of these, or even all of them together, deserved any reward from the Most High. This is one of the essential truths of the gospel, and it is constantly pressed upon our attention in the administration of infant baptism. Every time this sacrament is dispensed to a little child, all who witness it may be truly said to have had these words of our blessed Lord symbolically repeated to them—“Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

These are truths of essential consequence to all, and God in his wisdom and tender mercy has not only revealed and often repeated them, but he has also embodied them in the ordinance of

baptism, which will serve as a visible memorial of them in the church to all generations.

II. I now proceed to consider infant baptism as designed to keep up, in the minds of gospel worshippers, a constant remembrance of highly important duties, with the obligations to a conscientious discharge of them. And

1. Infant baptism is closely connected with the duty of parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is a most important connexion, and one which no Christian parent should ever lose sight of. For if it be disregarded at the administration of the ordinance, or if it be habitually and practically neglected afterwards, then I admit, that in that case, infant baptism is no better than a useless ceremony, and an awful profanation of a divine and most significant institution. Much, indeed, has been said about the rights and privileges of children,* and the sin of abridging them; but to me it appears that these rights and privileges are by no means worth arguing about, unless the ordinance be connected with parental instruction, admonition and prayer.

In this holy ordinance, believing parents recognise the covenanted promises of God, to be a God to them and their seed, which is a high encouragement to diligence in the discharge of their duty, and to earnestness in prayer for the divine blessing on their children. It is also to be remembered that in this, as in other cases, diligence in duty is connected with the fulfilment of the promise—"I know him," said God of Abraham, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Gen. xviii. 19. Thus Abraham bringing up his family in the fear of God, is connected with God's bringing on him that which he had spoken of him. It was in this way that God of old fulfilled his promise, by making one generation to tell of his wonderful works to another. "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to

* In the case of irreligious parents not being admitted to have their children baptized, many complain that the children are made to suffer for the fault of the parents. But the children of wicked parents suffer nothing by this. For, as Dr. Witherspoon well observes, "they can receive no benefit by baptism, but what they would have whether they were baptized or not, viz. that they are brought up among professing Christians, and by that means have some opportunities of knowing the truth of the gospel." See his sermon on Ministerial Fidelity, &c.

their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of the Lord, but keep his commandments." Ps. lxxviii. 5. 7. Moreover, God still continues to fulfil his promises to children through the instrumentality of parents. In the ordinary course of events, when parents bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." He pours out his Spirit on their seed, and his blessing on their offspring." On the contrary, if parents neglect their duty and still expect the blessing, whatever it may please God to do, they at least cherish a vain hope and an unwarranted presumption.

2. The ordinance of infant baptism also reminds the children of believing parents of their duty.

Every time that young persons, who are the children of godly parents, and who have been themselves baptized, are called to witness the administration of this ordinance, they are reminded of the precious privilege they have enjoyed. Especially that they have been dedicated to the Lord, and if their parents at the time of their baptism were properly exercised, it was with them a time of faith and prayer—That their parents in thus bringing them publicly to Christ to receive his blessing, placed their reliance on the promises, vowed to "train them up in the way they should go," and if they have been faithful, have laboured to discharge these solemn obligations.

As the enjoyment of privilege is connected with responsibility, so the young are reminded in this ordinance of their binding obligation to profit by the advantages they may have enjoyed; to value and improve the blessings of God's covenant; to seek that the blessings signified and sealed in baptism may be realized by them, and that at last their names may be found with the names of all the faithful in the Lamb's book of life. Children, as soon as they are capable of understanding, should be often and solemnly warned by their parents, and by the ministers of Christ, to beware of forgetting the covenant of their God, lest they bring upon themselves a curse and not a blessing.

3. Another use of infant baptism is, to remind the officers of the church, in their respective congregations, of their duty to the rising generation. The terms in which children are addressed in the apostolical epistles, shew clearly that their relation to the church is recognised in the Scriptures: "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Eph. vi. 1. "Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Col. iii. 20. That these and similar exhortations were addressed to children when very young, appears from the advice given to parents, and which immediately follows: "And ye fa-

thers provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6. 4. Here two things are observable. First, That the Apostles addressed young children not merely as members of families, but as belonging to churches by virtue of their relation to their parents, for the epistles were directed to churches and not to families. And, secondly, That the duty inculcated on parents begins with the dawn of reason in the infant mind, and keeps pace with its progress. This obligation is laid on parents, that they may be induced to teach their children as early as possible to come to Christ, who said, "Suffer little children to come to me," &c. As the relation of little children to the church is openly recognised in the ordinance of baptism, so the ministers of Christ and the other officers and members of the church, are bound to take a deep interest in them. It is true that the important duty of bringing up children in the way of righteousness devolves on parents. But the exhortations to children, in epistles addressed to churches, shew the interest which the Apostle took in them, and they contain an implied admonition to these churches to see that the rising generation be not overlooked. The way in which the church is to care for the spiritual interests of children is, to see that parents do their duty. By the dictates of nature, and by the authority of Scripture, the care of children is committed to their parents, and by the same authority the oversight of parents is committed to the church. This can be justified both upon general principles, and by particular precepts. The discipline of the church ought to extend to every kind of sin, and parents when they neglect the solemn trust committed to them, are chargeable with the violation of that positive precept, "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And surely there is no sin more injurious to the church, nor to the best interests of society, than this which so greatly affects the rising generation. No parent who lives in the habitual neglect of this duty can be a Christian, and no such parent should be permitted to be a member of the church of Christ. If he who provides not temporal things for his own, is to be considered worse than an infidel, how much more criminal is he who leaves his own children to perish for want of the meat which endureth to everlasting life?

From what the writer of this article has observed, he is fully persuaded that there is great need to pay more attention to this subject than is generally done. It is granted that much is done in present times for the religious instruction of youth; but it must be obvious to the careful observer, that this can but seldom prove effectual unless parents be in some measure faithful at

home. It is too much the custom of parents to devolve on others those duties, which God requires of themselves; and thus the religious education of youth is but too often neglected, or but very partially attended to. This is one principal reason why so many children grow up ignorant of the way of salvation; so soon set parental authority at defiance; in so many instances treat with contempt that faith into which they were baptized, and follow the multitude to do evil. The most obvious means of lessening, if not counteracting so great an evil, would be for ministers in public and private to press upon the attention of parents the duty of fulfilling their sacred trust, and upon children, the improvement of their precious privileges—by visiting from house to house to ascertain the state of family instruction and discipline, and to reprove or rebuke, or exhort or commend accordingly. In this and similar duties, the elders and private members of the church should do all in their power to aid their pastors, “that they may be fellow helpers to the truth,” and “that they who sow and they who reap may rejoice together.”

In conclusion, let Christian parents seriously consider the weighty trust committed to them. It is the charge of the immortal souls of their children. Let them remember that God requires of them to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and that it is their indispensable duty, to set their hearts on the salvation of their children—early to impress on their minds the unspeakable importance of eternal things—to teach them the fear of the Lord, and to present this object as the “one thing needful” to parental happiness. Were parents thus faithfully to discharge their interesting and important duties, and to follow up their exertions with the importunity of faithful prayer, soon might they expect to behold in their offspring a seed that the Lord hath blessed.

[The following article came to hand some time after the preceding, and was intended for a different number. As the former could not be inserted in the April number, to avoid giving them in different volumes, we insert both in this number. While they afford sufficient variety, we think they will be read with additional advantage, being placed together.—*Ed. R. Monitor.*

REMARKS

On the meaning of the word translated “to Baptize,” in the New Testament.

For the Religious Monitor.

SIR—The following are the remarks on BAPTIZO, which I promised to send, or rather a substitute for them; by giving them a place in the Monitor you will oblige your servant, A.

A great deal of learned criticism has been expended by the advocates of infant baptism, to shew that their mode of baptizing is every way consistent with the meaning of *Bapto* and *Baptizo*, according to the usages of the best Greek writers. In this I think they have been completely successful; nor can it be denied that they have produced evidence sufficiently strong to prove that the words in question signify to wet or cleanse in any way the object to be cleansed may require. It was once my intention to have submitted to your readers a concise view of the reasonings and criticisms to which I have adverted, with the evidence by which they are supported. But in the course of reading and reflecting on the subject of infant baptism, I have been convinced that the doctrine can neither be established nor overthrown by the etymology of these words. Though we were to admit that the primary meaning of *Baptizo* is to immerse, this would by no means establish the doctrine of the Baptists, nor do I think that even were we able to shew that *Baptizo* originally meant to sprinkle, that it would confirm the sentiments of the Poedo-Baptists, unless we could also prove that the word had always retained the same signification.

It will be readily admitted by all who are versant in the history and study of languages, that we cannot ascertain the meaning of words in their particular applications by tracing them back to their earliest etymology. Were we to adopt such a test of the import of terms, and apply it to any language whatsoever, it would lead us into endless mistakes and innumerable absurdities. The question before us is not, what is the original meaning of the Greek words *Bapto* and *Baptizo*? because no answer to this question can settle the point in dispute. But the sole inquiry ought to be, what is the sense in which these words are used in the Holy Scriptures? This brings the subject of discussion within a very narrow compass, and leads to the easiest as well as to the most satisfactory way of determining the controversy. By this method a detail of learned criticism may be entirely avoided, and the arguments, though necessarily connected with some words in the Greek language, may be brought within the reach of the unlearned. The remarks which follow are intended to be of this description, and to be limited as much as possible to the plain intimations of the word of God.

The object of the following observations is to prove:

- I. That *Bapto* and *Baptizo* signify in some parts of Scripture to wet or cleanse by pouring or sprinkling.
- II. That the baptism of the Spirit signified by baptism with water is associated in almost every instance with pouring out,

which goes to prove that baptism is properly effected by sprinkling or pouring. And

III. That the Baptists are unable to produce to us one instance recorded in Scripture, in which they can prove that baptism was effected by immersion.

I. I begin by noticing that *Bapto* and *Baptizo* in some passages of Scripture signify to cleanse or wet by sprinkling or pouring. As I wish to be perfectly candid I begin by admitting that these words signify to dip or immerse; and this is all that can be proved in favour of the interpretation given of them by Baptist writers. But it is my design to prove that this is not their only signification, and particularly that this is not the sense in which they are used by the sacred writers. If this can be proved, it will follow that baptism by immersion has no countenance from Scripture. And this can be done most satisfactorily by referring to one or two examples. Here I may direct the attention of the reader to the case of Nebuchadnezzar so often produced in this controversy, and never refuted. It is said in Dan. iv. 33. "His body was wet (*ebaphe* baptized) with the dew of heaven." Here it is obvious, that however wet the king's body may have been, suppose it to have been completely drenched, and that however heavy the eastern dews may have been, still the body was not wet by immersion, but by the gentlest of all kinds of sprinkling. In Rev. xix. 13. the word *Bapto* signifies to stain or sprinkle, as the garment of a warrior coming out of battle may be supposed to be sprinkled with blood. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped (*bebammenon* stained or sprinkled with) in blood." It is said by Homer that a lake coloured with the blood of a frog was baptized (*ebapteto*) and by Aristophanes that a comedian who smeared his face, baptized it.—From these instances, it is clear that the word *bapto*, signifies, to wet otherwise than by immersion. But as this word, though the theme or root of *baptizo*, is never used to express the ordinance of baptism, I shall in what remains confine my attention to this latter word.

Baptizo, occurs in a few instances where it has no relation to the ordinance of baptism, and some of these may now be noticed. In Mark vii. 4. it is said of the Pharisees and all the Jews that "when they come from the market, except they wash (*baptizantai*) they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptismous baptisins*) of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables. Here we must either conclude that the Jews were immersed in water every time they came from the market; that their pots, cups, brazen vessels, and tables

or couches on which they reclined at meals, were immersed or plunged under water, (a most improbable conclusion) or that these baptisms were effected by sprinkling or pouring according to the mode of purification prescribed in the law of Moses. Num. xix. 18. "A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels." It is said of the old dispensation, Heb. ix. 10. that it "stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, (*baptismous baptisms.*) Amongst these are obviously comprehended all the modes of ceremonial cleansing enjoined by the law. Of these the principal and most frequent was sprinkling. It is not denied that those cases in which the bathing of the body is prescribed are also intended, but it is every way sufficient for our purpose to shew that other methods of cleansing, and particularly sprinkling are included in these baptisms. In 1 Cor. x. 2. it is said of the Israelites "they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." No straining of this text can ever make it appear that these people were immersed in the cloud and in the sea, as Mr. Booth will have it.* For it is expressly said in Exod. xiv. 22. that "the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." This leaves no other way in which they could have been baptized, as the learned Dr. Clark observes, but by their being sprinkled with the aqueous vapour from above. These instances prove very satisfactorily, that the various sprinklings and washings among the Jews, are plainly called baptisms, and are expressed by the word *Baptizo*. No argument, therefore, can be drawn from the use of this word in favour of baptism by immersion, because there is good evidence that it signifies to wash or cleanse, either by sprinkling, pouring or bathing, or in whatever way the object to be cleansed may require. Accordingly, when we read of a person's being baptized, we cannot conclude with certainty from the use of this word, in what way he was baptized, although baptism by affusion or sprinkling appears to have the decided countenance of Scripture, as will appear by considering,

II. That the baptism of the Spirit signified by baptism with water, is associated in Scripture, in almost every instance, with pouring out.

It is but reasonable to suppose that there should be some correspondence between the rite itself, and that which it signifies or represents. Keeping this in view, let us proceed to notice how

* See Booth on Pædobaptism, abridged by Bryant, page 40.

the word God speaks about the manner of his bestowing the Spirit. "I will," saith God, "pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring." Isa. xliv. 3. "I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh." Acts ii. 17. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed (Greek, poured out) on us abundantly." Titus iii. 5. The question now arises, is this pouring out of the Spirit the same with the baptism of the Spirit? They who believe the Scriptures cannot doubt that it is, because we have the testimony of the Apostle Peter to this effect. This can be gathered, without the least straining, from the account which he gives of his visit and preaching to Cornelius, and his household, in the eleventh chapter of the Acts. In the 15th and 16th verses he says, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." The Spirit falling on them is equivalent to his being poured out on them, as appears from Acts x. 44, 45. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word, and they of the circumcision were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." From these text it is manifest, 1. That the Holy Spirit was *poured out*. 2. That this brought to Peter's recollection the promise, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost," which he looked upon as being now fulfilled. And 3. That this baptism was effected by *pouring out*. These three facts are all asserted in the most explicit terms, and they fully prove that the Apostle Peter considered pouring out as baptism. This is evidence with which I think we ought to be satisfied.

The language employed in the following part of the narrative also leads to the conclusion that those on whom the Holy Ghost had fallen, were baptized by affusion or sprinkling. There is no intimation given that they were conducted to a river, nor to any other place where they could be conveniently immersed, and the most reasonable conclusion is, that water was brought, and that they were baptized on the spot. "Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

For the sake of those who may not have examined the subject, it is proper to notice, that many passages of Scripture warrant us

to consider sprinkling or pouring as sufficiently expressive of washing or cleansing. Here, as in other cases, I refer the reader directly to the authority of Scripture. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Ps. xxxi. 7. "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean." From these and similar passages of Scripture, which are very numerous, it will be seen that sprinkling is held sufficient for cleansing. It now remains to be noticed,

III. That the Baptists cannot produce to us one instance recorded in Scripture, by which they can prove that baptism was performed by immersion.

I have already observed, that we have sufficient evidence that *Baptizo* is used in Scripture when pouring or sprinkling are intended, while it cannot be proved that it is ever used either in the Septuagint or New Testament to signify immersion. This word occurs twice in the Septuagint, and as some Baptist writers have placed great reliance on one of these instances, candour requires that it should be noticed. It occurs in 2. Kings iii. 14. and this, so far as I know, is the only part of Scripture where the word is translated to dip. "Then went he down and dipped (ebaptiseto baptize) himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God." Now, it is altogether impossible to determine from this passage, whether this dipping or washing was an immersion of the whole body, or only a part of it. All that can be ascertained with certainty is, that the prophet directed the leper to wash (v. 10)—that his servants persuaded him to wash, and that he went and baptized or washed according to the word of Elisha. Some, indeed, think that he only washed a part of his body, because there was only a part of it affected by the disease, and that the command to wash seven times refers to the law of purification, according to which the leper was to be sprinkled, but every candid person will easily see, that it is impossible to determine from the data we have, in what way he was washed or baptized. The other instance is allowed by all to be figurative, and expressive of God's pouring out his fury on the wicked, and consequently no argument can be drawn from it in favour of immersion.

It has been attempted by some Baptists to support the argument drawn from the etymology of *Baptizo*, from the use of the Greek preposition *en*, with which, they observe, it is generally connected, and which they render *in* or *into*. This argument, however, is founded entirely in ignorance. For every person acquainted with the indeterminate sense of the Greek pre-

sitions will readily admit that nothing can be proved from them, because their precise meaning, in any passage, can only be determined by the verb with which they are connected. Moreover, the preposition *en* in many instances signifies at, or near, and the expression *en to Jordane*, may be translated at or near Jordan, with as much propriety as *in Jordan*. But suppose we were to give the Baptists full liberty to translate this, and other Greek prepositions in their own way, still their cause would gain nothing by it, because before it could be of any use to them, they must prove that *baptizo* signifies exclusively to immerse, which they can never do. Nay, it can be made perfectly clear, that they are totally unable to prove that any one who is said to have been baptized, was ever so much as in the water at all.

The places where we read of baptism having been administered, have often been urged as strong evidence that it was performed by immersion. Some of these places were the river Jordan and non, *A*near to Salem, because there was much water there. Now, the very utmost that can be made of this is, that it is a presumption, but no certain proof of immersion. And the presumption rests entirely on the fact, that so far as we know, there was in these places an opportunity for immersion. This might be, and indeed ought to be considered good evidence in favour of immersion, if it could be proved to be impossible to baptize at or near a river in any other way. But as it is quite evident that persons might be baptized at a river by sprinkling, as well as by immersion, it must then appear that any argument drawn from persons being baptized at a river, in favour of immersion, must necessarily be a work of the fancy or imagination. It is true, indeed, so far as I know, at least, that none in our time baptize at rivers, but such as use immersion; but then the circumstances of John the Baptist differed widely from ours. He had great congregations, and many to baptize at one time, and for aught that appears he had no church to accommodate them, and hence to baptize his converts at a river, might be the most convenient method he could adopt. So, that although those who baptize by sprinkling, generally do it in a church or in a house, yet it is not at all unlikely, that had they such numbers to baptize, as John the Baptist or some of the Apostles had, and no churches to hold them, then they might find it very convenient and proper to go to a river as John the Baptist did.

Great stress is laid by some Baptist writers on the baptism of the Ethiopan eunuch, which they consider as a case altogether to their mind. But if this case be examined with a little care, it

will then appear that so far from giving any countenance to baptism by immersion, it will serve to set aside the whole of their argument derived from the modes of expression employed in our translation of the New Testament, such as going down *into the water*, and coming up *out of the water* and the like. It may therefore be worth while to consider it for a moment. The whole transaction is recorded in Acts viii. 38, 39. "They went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more." From this it appears that the act of baptizing was something quite distinct from going down *into the water*, or coming up *out of it*. If these expressions had any thing to do with baptism, then it would follow that Philip was baptized as well as the Eunuch, for both went *down into the water*, and both came *up out of the water*. The plain truth, however, seems to be, that Philip and the Eunuch descended together from the chariot to, or into the river, and after they had descended Philip baptized the Eunuch. But in what way he administered the ordinance, whether by sprinkling or by immersion, we are not informed. When the Eunuch was baptized, they ascended together out of the water. Both went down and both came up, only one of them was baptized. Had Philip and the Eunuch descended into the bed of the river or stream, to the waters edge, and had Philip baptized him by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, the historian in giving an account of the transaction, could hardly have used any other language than what he has employed in the narrative. Any attempt, therefore, to draw an argument from this case in favour of immersion, must necessarily be regarded as an entire failure.

From all these facts and observations put together, I think it is very certain that the Baptists have not one foot breadth of Scriptural ground to stand upon, nor have they produced one Scriptural fact to countenance them in their practice of baptizing by immersion. Whereas, we are able to prove that *Baptizo* signifies to sprinkle in many instances, and that we have the Apostle Peter's testimony that baptism is effected by *pouring out*. In conclusion, I have only further to remark, that although we can bring forward strong evidence in favour of infant baptism—that although we can produce the best authority for baptizing by sprinkling, and that although we allow it to be of great importance that the ordinance of Christ be administered in a Scriptural manner, yet it ought to be carefully remembered, that the outward ceremony can be of no value without the thing signified

thereby, and that the sacraments can only become effectual means of salvation, by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them, that by faith receive them. As "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." So, let every one consider that although he may have been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and may be a reputable member of the visible church, yet "except he be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." A.



[Though not originally written for publication, we have thought proper to insert the following letter, addressed by a gentleman of this city, to his cousin, a minister of the gospel, residing in one of the eastern states.]

For the Religious Monitor.

ALBANY, Feb. 10, 1828.

DEAR COUSIN—Yours of 22d November came to hand; your kind regard expressed for our *spiritual* as well as temporal welfare, is to me a pleasing evidence of a truly Christian spirit. That you may be abundantly furnished unto every good word, doctrine and work, and that you and all yours may experience the rich consolations of the gospel, which in the providence of God, you are appointed to dispense to others, I trust will ever be the ardent desire and prayer of him who now addresses you. I am happy to learn from your letter that the good work is progressing in your congregation, and that souls are gathering into the visible kingdom of the Redeemer. This doubtless is attended with an increase of ministerial duties and labours; but, see the precious and timely promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, my grace shall be sufficient for thee." Nevertheless, the ministry of reconciliation, or the office of an ambassador of Christ is in my view one of the most solemn and responsible situations of any I can conceive of; and I think it is rendered much more so at the present period, from the lamentable fact, that innovation, damnable heresy, and infidelity, seem to more than keep pace with all the Christian zeal and enterprise that prevail in our land. And from close personal observation, I am greatly mistaken if Satan has not more adherents or disciples in what is called the christian church; nay even in the ministry, than has Christ the glorious and exalted King and head of the church. This you will, perhaps say, is a very sad picture of the visible church of the living God; but, my dear friend, if I am to take the whole word of God (and I know of no other safe and infallible rule) for the whole length and breadth of my guide

and duty; both for doctrine, government and discipline in the church of Christ, and compare it with what seems to be the prevailing sentiments as well as practice of the present time, it will not I think be wide of the truth: and from the depravity of our nature and the deceitfulness of the human heart, perhaps no one is above the influence of public opinion, nor should they be in a certain sense, and to a certain extent; but extremes in Christians are dangerous. Even in regard to ministers of the gospel, few, if any, are so self-denied as to be above the influence of public opinion, or free from the shackles of the world's trinity, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Their calling and situation place them amid strong temptations to betray their Master's interest; being often more under the influence of sense than faith, they are sometimes lead to trust more to the allurements of the mammon of unrighteousness, than to the simple promises of God. Hence that thirst for popular applause; that studied care to preach a gospel that shall by no means be offensive to the men of the world, to the idolator, the covetous, the Sabbath-breaker; that daubing with untempered mortar; that exalting free will and free agency, at the expense of free and sovereign grace; that keeping out of sight the total inability of man to any holy exercise or volition; that throwing Christ and his righteousness, as the only meritorious ground of justification, into the back ground; and, if he is exhibited at all, he is merely brought in as a kind of mediator, in order to make good some little deficiency, if indeed there should be any at last to make good; thereby putting the whole work of salvation into the hands of poor helpless creatures; that mighty effort which is making for a general union, a general amalgamation of all sects, parties and principles, (the word of God to the contrary, notwithstanding,) however discordant their views of doctrine, government and discipline may be, which would seem to make Christ and his Apostles a narrow minded set of bigots, and the Reformers a set of fanatics, for insisting so much on the necessity of a strict regard to the authority of God, in his word and ordinances—of holding fast the faith once delivered to the saints, and of personal holiness as being the best evidences of a child of God, and of an interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ. These are things which appear to be of minor importance with a large majority of the professing part of the community. At present the plain and pure doctrine of the gospel appear to afford them no food, no satisfaction; something more elegant and splendid; something that shall come up to the standard which the fashion of the world has erected, must be

adopted, which is a kind of religious crusade, a fiery zeal for proselyting to the party, rather counting on numbers than graces, which appears to be the main article with the great body of professors. Now, the direct tendency of this appears to be, to lead the mind off from the word of God, beget in it low and unworthy views of his character, his authority and ordinances. And the effect is, that it nourishes spiritual pride, and fills the visible church with hypocrites; and then, like people like preacher, for so they will have it, and so they rap it up. But to the law and to the testimony; and what an appalling picture have we of those shepherds who feed themselves and not their flocks, given us in the 13th and 34th chapter of Ezekiel, which every minister ought often to read over; and says another servant of God, "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophecy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed; the prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully; what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord." And so, under the gospel dispensation, the treasure is put into earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may (not only be, but appear to) be of God, and not of man. And when I read the commission given, by the great head of the church, it appears to be plain, simple and explicit. He says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Now observe the promise is annexed to the teaching of *all* things, as regards the revealed will of God, and that only is our rule of duty; but it would seem that not a few at least, have substituted the word *some* instead of the word *all*; and then every difficulty is removed in regard to their favourite system of union of sects and parties. The great essentials say they we all agree in, and as for the non-essentials, we will not contend for them, thereby making much of the word of God, of no account. And is this not evidently pouring contempt upon the wisdom of its Divine Author, for revealing to us so much of these non-essentials, as many seem to find in the Divine Oracles? Are such latitudinarians aware how carefully the whole word of God is guarded, both in the Old and New Testament. At the close of the old it is written—"Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Here is no liberty given for taking away or neglecting any part thereof, whatever any may think as to adding thereunto. But the New Testament closes with a more solemn and awful sanction: "If any man shall

take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." The expressions in the first member of the verse are worthy of notice. It does not merely say, if any shall take away the book, or deny it altogether as many do, although this class of sinners may be included; yet I apprehend it has a more direct reference to those who admit it to be a revelation from God, and therefore the expressions are peculiar. If any man shall take away from the words, so that the book is not only guarded, but the very words and every word equally so, there is therefore no redundancy, no non-essentials here: and the consequence is equally fatal for adding, as for taking away; all such shall have no part or portion in that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away—"and that no principle is more fully established in God's word than this, that a strict regard to his authority is the very essence of all true religion, for neither our faith nor our practice can be right only in so far as we are influenced by a regard to God's authority, both in revealing as well as in commanding. Hence the Scriptures abound with many solemn warnings on this subject," to admonish all those who may be disposed to take more latitude than the word of God affords them. "For instance, why was Nadab and Abihu struck dead for offering strange fire? Was it because the one species of fire in itself was less suitable to consume the sacrifice than the other? No: but because God had enstamped his authority upon the one, and not upon the other. Why, again, was God displeased with David and his people, and with Uzzah on another occasion, but for a contempt of his authority. And further, why could not the waters of Abana and Pharpar cure Naaman's leprosy? Simply because the command of God directed him to Jordan, and nowhere else could the blessing be obtained. These few instances may serve to teach us this fundamental truth, that a strict regard to the authority of God in his word, lies at the very foundation of all vital practical religion. When, therefore, the church is infested with a spirit of self-will, self-sufficiency, and carnal policy, which leads men to make their own reason, fancy or imagination, the criterion of truth or duty; then indeed we may look for a corrupt, temporising, time-serving ministry, which is one of the greatest curses that ever fell upon the church of God:"* and I fear it is too much the case at present, and that every truly devoted child of God, has abundant cause to mourn for her sad de-

* See, in a former number of the Monitor, Rev. Andrew Heron's Sermon at the ordination of Rev. A. Whyte.

fection from her primitive purity and simplicity; and to tremble for her safety—for her safety did I say? No, for she is built upon Christ the Rock of ages, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against her. She is secured by covenant, by an everlasting covenant too, of which Christ the glorious and exalted Mediator is one of the contracting parties—a covenant, well ordered in all things and sure: sure, because it is ordered by infinite wisdom; and it is secured by Almighty power, truth and righteousness.— Nevertheless, there is great cause for sighing and crying for all the abominations done in the land. Now, my dear friend, do not suppose, that while I am thus freely communicating to you my views on this subject, any personal application is intended, but only that the experience of more than sixty years has taught me, that they are not all Israel that are of Israel; and I trust that the grace of God has fully convinced me, that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid in Zion, which is Christ, and on which any can with safety build for eternity. But the tares are to grow with the wheat, until the harvest, when those ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be the heirs of salvation, shall make a complete separation, for nothing unholy or unclean shall ever enter the New Jerusalem above.— That you and I, and all ours, may be enabled through sovereign grace to war a good warfare, and so to run as to keep our garments unspotted from the world, and our skirts clean from the blood of souls and at last be able to say with the great apostle, I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, may God in the riches of his mercy grant.

Now, my dear friend, I have all along had my eye upon a most formidable enemy of the church, that you may never perhaps have thought of, as such. This adversary and enemy is freemasonry, or masonic influence, in the church of God, and an enemy too, which doubtless has had, and still has, an extensive influence in corrupting her doctrines.

As I have sent you a book on freemasonry, I shall take the liberty to give you a short sketch of my views of the system of masonry, as the result of more than thirty years observation: for it is more than that length of time, since I was often asked, why I did not join the order of freemasons. My answer then, was, that as I did not know what it contained or what it embraced—that in order to satisfy myself as to its utility, I intended to watch the conduct of its votaries and to examine its fruits. And if I should find from such examination, that freemasonry made men better members of society—better fathers—better children—better Christians, then, I might be induced to join

them. But experience and close observation have taught me that masonry has had, and still has, the direct contrary tendency. It has a most withering and deleterious effect, especially as regards Christianity. So that my judgment of masonry has not been hastily formed from any events which have recently transpired; but from tracing causes and effects up to their ultimate results. And the amount of my observation is, that the principle leaders among them, are, with very few exceptions, infidels in principle. They make a mock at sin, ridicule all the great and leading doctrines of salvation as revealed in God's most holy word, and speak with sneering contempt of every thing like salvation through free, sovereign grace, reigning through righteousness by Jesus Christ unto eternal life. In regard to those among them who had subsequently made a profession of the christian religion, if at any time they have appeared to take any delight in religion, or in the society of the saints, or in the ordinances of God's appointment, so as to afford good evidence that a work of grace had been wrought in their hearts by the holy Spirit, they have uniformly as they advanced in life, withdrawn from their society and lodge meetings. In some cases I have observed those who had made a profession of religion before joining the masonic order, who exhibited in their lives little more than the mere form of godliness, and in some instances given sad evidence that the root of the matter was not in them. So that I have been led to a full conviction in my own mind, that the whole system of freemasonry, is of that wicked one; that it is founded in infidelity; that it is identified with the man of sin; and with the hidden mystery of iniquity; and that masonic anti-christ is a term as applicable and proper as that of papal anti-christ. Doubtless both are of the same origin. Infidelity is the fountain and source of their existence. They are one and the same in principle, object and design: and therefore I consider freemasonry of all others, the most formidable and dangerous enemy to civil liberty: but more especially is it the enemy of the pure and simple doctrines of the gospel. Because masons almost exclusively fill every throne and occupy every station, not only in the civil and military departments, but also in colleges and seminaries of education. Now, I would ask, is there another power on earth leagued and bound together by ties so indissoluble as masons consider their horrid obligations to be? for we have the most satisfactory evidence that a thorough going mason considers his obligation to the fraternity more binding upon his conscience than any other law, human or divine, and consequently makes it paramount to every other consideration. They are scattered over the whole world, and have one common interest:

They are under the control of, and are marshalled by an experienced and skillful leader, even the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience; for it is to this prince of darkness that every one, who has taken their blasphemous oaths, has sworn allegiance: Because God has no where either commanded or sanctioned such oaths as are imposed and taken by masons in their midnight conclaves within the walls of a lodge room. I ask, then, where on earth can be found such a combined power, that can produce such a simultaneous movement, if God permit, and wage war against the saints? I think, if we will examine masonic principles and practices, their numbers and combination, their power and influence, both in church and state, with unbiased minds, and compare them with predicted events yet to take place, we shall find a striking analogy between the two.— Thus runs the prediction : “ For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.” Rev. xvii. 17. And who is prepared to say that this prophecy is already fulfilled? And who are those that shall thus fulfil the irresistible purposes of God? I think the answer is at hand. They are those that “ shall yet hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.” Rev. xvii. 16. And they are also people, and multitudes, and nations and tongues. And I think this cannot be confined to Papal Rome exclusively; but is to be taken in a more general sense as including the enemies of God throughout the world; even all those that have in any manner been intoxicated with the wine of her fornication, and have committed fornication with her, and waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies until the awful tragedy shall take place. An admirable description of the characters of the actors in this scene is given in 2. Tim. iii. 1—5. And if you will carefully read over the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezek. the 11th of Daniel, and the 16th, 17th and 18th of Revelation, you will, I had almost said, see in reality, what the prophets saw in vision; and he who knows the end from the beginning, knows what influence masonic principles had in corrupting the church at that early day; and he also knows whether this mighty combination is not that very host that shall be collected from the four quarters of the earth, and shall meet with a dreadful overthrow previous to the ushering in of the Millennial Day. The prevalence of heresy and infidelity, and the signs of the times, render it not improbable that the beast may change his ground and method of attack, and arise

in the Masonic Anti-Christ; so that if those scenes of the persecutions and bloodshed of Papal Rome are to be acted over again, (doubtless they will be previous to the universal reign of Christ in his gospel;) if, I say, these tragedies are again to take place on the theatre of this earth, I see no good reason why we should suppose that Anti-Christian Rome is to be the principal actor in those scenes, she doubtless will act the part, and only the part assigned her in the eternal purposes of God. This enemy of God and man which has so long been drunk with the blood of saints, will doubtless form a component part of that mighty host; but since it is a truth that will not be denied that the most violent papal persecutors were often concealed infidels, so that infidelity concealed under any other mask equally answers the prediction, and so dropping the papal, may it not well apply to the Masonic Anti-Christ.

I would not be understood as denying or gainsaying the views given of Anti-Christ, by the most able commentators; but only to place freemasonry in the foremost ranks, just where they themselves claim to be. I broach no new interpretation of Anti-Christ. It is principles and not terms, his legitimate children and loyal subjects, that I aim to designate.

And when the period above alluded to shall have arrived, the combined power of free masons throughout the world shall then be consummated by a legal as well as mystical union, with the whore of Babylon. For that mystical union or union of the mystery of iniquity has always subsisted between them. Let not any startle here and attempt to take shelter under the plea that they know nothing of this harlot, having had no connection with her. Let all such remember that one day they will be convinced that there is such a thing as a spiritual as well as a carnal whoredom. Now, you observe the prediction is, "For God hath put into their hearts to fulfil his will," &c. and when that last and most decisive battle shall be fought, doubtless masons will hold the most conspicuous rank in that awful tragedy. For as they are very fond of power and titles of nobility, they will of course have the principal command, not indeed in their official character of Free and Accepted Masons, but in their real true character that of Anti-Christ, the enemies of God and of his Christ. So that when this enemy shall come in like a flood, his coming in will be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Now, what think you of such a power as this? Is it not tenfold to that of papal Rome? Is not her power comparatively local and circumscribed, whereas this

Masonic Anti-Christ is already in possession not only of all the outposts, but even of the very citadel itself? for do they not hold a controlling influence both in church and state, throughout the Christian, the Pagan, and Mahometan world? They receive into cordial fellowship the professed Christian, the Jew, the Pagan, and the Mahometan; all are embraced by the brotherhood without distinction of sect, party or principle, and this they boast of as one peculiar excellence of their order.

I am aware of the high pretensions which they make to character. They claim all the great, the wise and the noble of the earth. They say that the wise King of Israel was a master mason; and they even claim the Saviour of sinners as a brother mason. Now, if they would wish to know the foundation of such a claim as the last, and what success their Great Grand High Priest met with, when he attempted to initiate him into their mysteries, and to impose on him the masonic oath, they will please to turn to St. Matthew iv. 3—11. where they will find a full account of the process, and of the result.

Thus the arch deceiver draws the unwary into his snare, and by his infidel principles leads them on step by step, until by his masonic oath he takes a mortgage of both soul and body to ratify and confirm this deed of darkness. And he is virtually the same now that he ever has been, whatever may have been his outward appearance in circumstances at different periods of the world. He is still the same accommodating character that we have frequent accounts of in the word of God, and is capable of transforming himself into an angel of light, whenever it will subserve his interest: for he is associated with principalities and powers—with spiritual wickedness in high places, as well as with the rulers of the darkness of this world; and of course he is a most skilfull politician; is always busily engaged at all political meetings, at all elections, and in the halls of legislation, and at our civil courts. He has much business with the advocate at the bar, and sometimes with the Judge on the bench. He also works his way into the jury box; and as he moves in the higher circles of life, he is to be met with in the ball-room and theatre, as well as at the card, and the billiard table, the tipling house and brothel. And as he can accommodate himself to any sort of company, he is not unfrequently admitted into our religious societies; nay even into our ecclesiastical courts; and from thence he has an easy access into the pulpit; and here a wide field is opened before him. And as he is a most profound theologian, understanding all mystery, (that is, the mystery of iniquity,) with the experience of near six thousand years, he is often

considered an important acquisition to our colleges and theological seminaries. And being a great adept in all the dead languages, he is constantly making new discoveries to his deluded followers, such as that the word of God contains nothing like original or imputed guilt—nothing of a trinity of persons in the God Head—nothing of a vicarious substitute for sin—nothing of an imputed righteousness for justification before God; and by these means he is able so to explain the word of God as to form a system of religion every way agreeable to masonic principles. And hence he is not opposed to, but often very zealous and active in what is called revivals of religion. He appears friendly, forward and liberal in promoting all Education—Tract Missionary and Bible Societies, provided he can get his own agents employed, and his goods, wares and merchandise disposed of, and thereby corrupt the pure word of God. An instance of his deep intrigue, and how he has practised and prospered may be seen in the conduct of the London Bible Society as given in the speech of the Rev. Andrew Thomson, before the Edinburgh Bible Society. But besides his religious and political character, he is a great factor, extensively engaged in commerce, and a catalogue of the merchandize in which he deals may be seen in Rev. xviii. 12, 13; but the most important article in the whole list, and the one in which he takes the deepest interest, is in *slaves and souls of men*—not one of which shall ever be redeemed from his power, but by the blood of the incarnate God, Emanuel God in our nature—and this branch of business, I apprehend, belongs to him as the ruler of the darkness of this world. For this is his strong hold, and here are all his dark and hellish plots hatched, and all his deluded and humble vassals bind themselves under the most horrid and blasphemous oaths to keep forever all their master's secrets. And this, I think, may emphatically be called the masonic trap, by which this crafty fowler has for near 6,000 years been carrying on an extensive trade in *slaves and souls of men*. And this seems to accord so well with the antiquity that masons claim for the origin of their order, that I readily agree with them, and give them full latitude as to time, since free-masonry is identified with Anti-Christ. For in the Apostles time he says—"Even now are there many Anti-Christ," and he tells us who he means by Anti-Christ. "It is he that denieth the Father and the Son;" so that these Anti-Christians were then in the visible church, among the professed people of God, and became leaders of heretical sects, bringing in and teaching damnable doctrines from that day till this. And although they had not as yet assumed a systematic, organized charac-

ter, yet may not their character now be distinctly seen in masonic principles and practice? For masonry as a system has no Saviour, no atonement, no Holy Spirit, no original depravity, no regeneration, no justifying righteousness, but their own works. Yet this society pretends to a religion, and to take the word of God for their rule and guide; and even one of their own members who ministers at the altar of God, says that their religion is superior in excellence to the Christian religion; and one reason he assigns for its superiority is, that it is a very ancient order. As to that I freely yield; and if they would but be as candid as their great prototype once was, whose name and number is Legion, when "He cried with a loud voice, and said, what have I to do with thee Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Mark v. 7. If they would be as honest as their great father, they would then confess that masonry is as old as Satan himself; he being the father and founder of it; and that it takes its origin from the revolt of the rebel angels; and that the first practical exhibition of its fruits was in shedding the blood of righteous Abel. "O my soul come thou not into their secret; unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united." But forever blessed be the name, the truth and faithfulness of Jehovah Jesus; he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision, and all his enemies shall at last drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which shall be poured without mixture into the cup of his indignation; while every chosen vessel given to Christ in the everlasting covenant of redemption, shall hear his voice saying unto them, come ye blessed, &c.

But perhaps I have already written more than you will have patience to read, and as I have given you an outline of my views in relation to freemasonry, &c. I have only to request of you, a full and free exchange of sentiments, while in the patience and faith and hope of the gospel,

I subscribe myself, &c.

To the Editor of the Religious Monitor.

SIR—In your number for November a "Constant Reader" proposes the query, "Is the Associate Church in North America justifiable in maintaining a separate constitution and communion from the other denominations in the United States?" As no answer has yet been published the following observations on this point are submitted. To discuss the subject fully would re

quire more space than would be proper for your paper. Plainness and truth only have been aimed at. I consider it wholly unnecessary to say any thing on the difference between the principles of the Associate Church, and the numerous bodies throughout the land, who openly in their *declared articles* of faith, embrace the Arminian heresy, and other kindred doctrines, as these differ entirely from what we consider the doctrines of free grace. And if a satisfactory reason can be given why she maintains, and ought to maintain a separate constitution and communion from those churches which profess to believe, in general, the same system of doctrines with herself, this will be much stronger in reference to churches professing sentiments so very different.

Yours,

J. W.

REASONS

Why the Associate Church in North America maintains a separate constitution and communion from the other denominations in the United States.

The church, the house of the living God, may be regarded as visible or invisible. The latter consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof. The former consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children.

Unity is one of the most important attributes of the visible church. It is one house, one kingdom, one body. As a house, it has but one foundation; as a kingdom, it has one governor; and as a body, it has one head. This unity of the church is frequently recognised, and explicitly taught in the Scriptures. It was exhibited in the structure of the tabernacle. The ten curtains of fine twined linen, forming its internal covering were coupled each to the others with fifty loops and taches; and the fifty curtains of goats hair were coupled in the same manner: and all "that it might be one tabernacle. To instruct the worshippers in the same truth; and to guard them against schism, they had but one tabernacle, one altar, one laver, one table of shew bread, one altar of incense, one lamp, one ark, one priesthood, and one place of public worship." Paul binds with a seven-fold cord the members of the church to preserve its unity. "There is one body and one Spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

The preservation, in appearance and in reality, of this unity of the church may justly be regarded as highly important. "For

a kingdom or house divided against itself cannot stand." Divided, the church presents a tempting conquest to the invading foe; united she forms an invincible phalanx. Her first divisions were occasioned by the separation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and proved productive of the most disastrous and protracted consequences. Judah vexed Israel, and Israel vexed Judah; one portion of the church of God fought against another, hired the assistance of the heathen, and wasted one another till both were carried into captivity, Jerusalem, the holy city, laid on heaps, and the temple of the Lord burnt with fire. Schisms and factions arose early in the Christian church, disturbed her peace and defaced her glory; but so strongly was she impressed with a conviction of the importance of unity, that she dreaded, deprecated and long avoided a rupture. At last, however, the bond of peace was broken; the one church of God was divided into fragments, and to this day, after all her attempts to recover union, exhibits not the spectacle of an army "terrible with banners;" but of innumerable hostile parties, skirmishing with one another in deadly feuds. Their ranks are drawn up, and their weapons pointed against one another, oftener than against the enemies of the Lord.

There have been, and there still continue to be, two classes of grand subverters of the unity of the church; those that teach error, practice iniquity and abuse their Christian liberty, on the one hand; and the intolerant on the other. The former are both the occasion and the cause of the distraction and separation; and when they proceed to extremes and are not expelled, the purity of religion cannot be maintained without separation from them. When a church becomes thus circumstanced, and reformation cannot be effected, those that have kept their garments clean, are called to come out of her, lest they be partakers of her sins and plagues. In this case, the corrupt majority, although the genuine cause of the separation, impute the blame of the separation to those that secede from them and condemn their proceedings. On the other hand, the intolerant, instead of extending forbearance in love to those that differ from them, and are disagreeable to them, break, without just cause, the friendly covenant with their brethren, renounce their fellowship, and count them as heathen men and publicans. Such are strangers to that meekness, long suffering and forbearance which are the ornament of the Christian. Even these Christian duties, suppose the imperfections and failures of associates, and must operate to a certain extent in the militant church, where perfect unanimity of sentiment, affection and action does not obtain,

or there can be no visible church fellowship. Orthodoxy and uniformity, of which his own views are the standard, are idols to which he is as willing to sacrifice the peace and unity of the church, as the latitudinarian is to offer up, to undue forbearance, nothing less than truth and righteousness. The one condemns the other, while true religion suffers by both. The grand practical question to be determined is, "*The precise extent to which forbearance is to be carried.*"

There is a point in forbearance short of which we cannot separate from others, without displeasing God and injuring ourselves and others, and beyond this point it cannot be extended with impunity. The intolerant and the latitudinarian give themselves little concern about ascertaining this point; but, to ascertain it aright, is one of the most difficult and puzzling questions which the intelligent and tender Christian is called to determine in the whole range of church fellowship. The most lax acknowledge that there are reasons sufficient to warrant separation, and others will constrain them to continue separate by refusing to hold fellowship with them. When Whitefield was asked why he did not hold communion with Wesley, he replied "I would hold fellowship with my dear brother; but he will not hold fellowship with me." And when the separation is once made on good grounds, the prudent will continue it till there is a prospect of a profitable re-union.

The church being at present divided into numerous parties, even in the same country, and these, instead of diminishing by Scriptural union, daily multiplying, how are they to conduct in respect to church fellowship? Do consistency and duty require them to mingle occasionally and partially with one another in church fellowship, or to withdraw from all occasional and partial fellowship with those, from whom they are ecclesiastically separated? The principles and practices of different individuals and denominations are various on this subject. Some practice promiscuous, some restricted communion. The sentiments of the compilers of the Westminster Confession of Faith concerning maintaining communion with other churches, being in the same place with themselves, are stated in a publication by them, extracts from which may be found in the Religious Monitor, vol. iii. p. 24—32. They seem to have been willing to admit to communion with themselves, the ministers and members of foreign churches, sojourning for a time among them; but peremptorily declined maintaining fellowship with other denominations existing in the same country with themselves. For this part of their conduct they assigned these reasons: "To agree to

recognise separate churches, in one and the same land, and to maintain fellowship with them in ministerial labours and sealing ordinances, is to sanction divisions and schisms in the church, and to render them perpetual. The separation must be needless when persons in one communion can have their children baptized in another, both sit down at the same communion table, and when the ministers exchange pulpits and have a standing in each others judicatories. It plainly holds out the lawfulness of "gathering churches out of true churches"—whereof we are assured there is not the least hint of an example in all the book of God." It occasions many irritations between the parties going away, and those whom they leave, and again between the church that may be forsaken, and that to which they may go, and all manner of confusion in families where the members belong to different churches must necessarily ensue.

An entire change of views on the subject of church communion has obtained among Presbyterians in America. Instead of adhering to the views of the Westminster Divines, they have adopted and acted on the proposal of the Independents, which the compilers of the Confession declined. The Presbyterians of America have thus practically condemned the conduct of these venerable men, and approved of the sentiments and practices of the Independents.

The Reformed Dutch Church, and the Associate Reformed Church, after acting for years on the principle of restricted communion, evinced a desire to be like their neighbours, and have now for some time imitated their practices in maintaining Christian and ministerial fellowship with other churches. Even some ministers of the steady and hitherto rigid Reformed Church, have begun to discover symptoms of uneasiness under their restrictions, and of a propensity to be like the other liberal churches of the day.

In respect to what is called liberal and charitable communion, the Associate Church is like to fall into the rear of all of the churches which once practised restricted communion except the close communion Baptists. In this age of change, it becomes her judicatories, her ministers and members to awaken and reconsider whether the reasons she once assigned for declining the communion of other churches, were satisfactory—whether they still exist, and whether they are increased or diminished. To call attention to these matters, was likely the design of your querist, and in some measure to effect this, is the design of the writer.

The Associate Church above forty years ago assigned the following reasons for declining fellowship with the Presbyterian

Church in America: "The well known differences in sentiment and practice which obtain in both churches respecting church communion—the necessity of a public joint confession of faith—the duty of public covenanting—the singing of the Psalms of David in worshipping assemblies." These reasons still remain in all their force, and to them may now be added another to which has for some time prevailed to such an extent as not only be highly injurious to religion and the interests of truth; but must, unless prevented, very soon prove the destruction of the body—I mean the sufferance of the most dangerous and insidious errors, without adequate censure; nay, without even the appearance of judicial opposition. Formerly, an adherence to the Confession of Faith, formed the basis of ecclesiastical union among these now styled the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. This adherence to that excellent form of sound words was so loose, that it admitted of the exception of what not only the supreme ecclesiastical judicatory, but any presbytery subordinate to it, might judge "not essential or necessary in doctrine, worship or government." This laxity, dangerous to soundness of faith and unity of views in the same society, was afterwards set aside, and now every entrant into the ministry engages 'sincerely to receive and adopt the Confession of Faith in that church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.' Definite and proper as this engagement is, it cannot and will not be denied, that at present many ministers in that church hold, avow, and publish, without censure, principles opposite to those contained in their own Confession. One of themselves has publicly charged some of his brethren (and the justness of the charge is tacitly admitted) with holding among others the following tenets: "That God is the author of sin;" "That moral depravity is predicateable of nothing but of volitions, and that the will is the exclusive fountain of sin in the soul of man;" "That the apostacy of our first parents has not affected the intellectual powers of their posterity, and that there is no such thing as inherent moral depravity;" "That there are no means of grace, and that there is no real instrumental agency in the renovation and progressive sanctification of sinners in any case;" "That all holiness consists in disinterested love to God, and being general, and that no person is reconciled to God who is not willing, from this disinterested love, to be everlastinglly damned for the divine glory;" "That after conversion a man's moral exercises are all perfectly holy or perfectly sinful;" "That unrenewed sinners have a natural ability to convert themselves, and keep the moral law perfectly." After stating the Scriptural ground of a sinner's acceptance with God, he subjoins: "Some of

our pious brethren fervently teach these highly *reprehensible*, and in their tendency *pernicious* doctrines;" "That a limited atonement would be an impeachment of the divine character;" "That the atonement paid no debt, it involved the infliction of no penalty;" "That Christ could not have made an adequate atonement, if the atonement implied that he must endure sufferings equal to the eternal damnation of all those who will be finally saved;" "That the penalty of the law, strictly speaking, was not inflicted at all, that the sufferings of Christ were not of a legal nature, and constituted no part of the curse which was threatened against the transgressor. That the idea of the atonement which supposes that Christ literally suffered the penalty of the law for those who shall be finally saved, destroys all mercy in God the Father—precludes all grace in the salvation of his people,—brings no accession of happiness to the universe, and annihilates every particle of benevolence in the gospel. That the merit and adequacy of Christ's righteousness resulted not in any measure from the dignity of his person;" "That our Saviour's sufferings were no part of his obedience to the moral law;" "That the atonement was an expedient for honouring God, and keeping the world in awe, while he relinquished the penalty of his holy law in favour of all true penitents," &c. These and similar tenets, openly and extensively taught in the Presbyterian Church, embrace the substance of Hopkinsianism, and are so contrary to the Confession of Faith and our testimony, that if they do not justify those who sincerely espouse the one, in declining church fellowship with those that espouse the other, it would be difficult to find any difference in faith and practice that would warrant separate communion.

Too many of the same reasons, which justify our separation from the Presbyterian Church, exist, to warrant our separation from the Reformed Dutch Church. This church, after long employing an inspired Psalmody in the praise of God, and maintaining a fair character for soundness in the faith by her adherence to the excellent system of doctrine contained in the articles of the Synod of Dort, has adopted into her Psalmody many of Watts' imitations and hymns of human composure; while the prevalence of Hopkinsianism and laxity of discipline in her, have tarnished her glory and troubled the peace of many of her friends. These innovations have given much and just ground of dissatisfaction to many that still remain in her communion, and have induced others to secede from her. Those who have seceded from the fellowship of the prevailing party, and formed

themselves into a distinct church, have published the reasons that influenced them. They continue to profess adherence to the primitive faith and discipline of the Reformed Dutch Church, and are testifying against the corruption of both by the prevailing party.

In the year 1754, in consequence of repeated application to the General Associate Synod in Scotland, from persons formerly belonging to her communion, who had emigrated to this country, two missionaries were sent out who constituted themselves into a Presbytery subordinate to the General Associate Synod. By the arrival of other missionaries, their number was in a short time considerably increased, and in 1776 they were divided into the two Presbyteries of New-York and Pennsylvania. For some years after this, attempts had been made to form a union with the Reformed Presbytery. After several failures a union was at length effected by the Presbytery of New-York in 1780, and by the Presbytery of Pennsylvania in 1782. (See Narrative prefixed to the testimony of the Associate Church.) Against this union two members of the Presbytery of Pennsylvania protested and appealed to the Synod in Scotland. The appeal was sustained, and the union of course was condemned. The reasons assigned by the protesting brethren, and which were approved by the church in Scotland, respected the irregularity of the proceedings, relative to the union, the ambiguity of the articles on which it was formed, and the dereliction of principle on the part of the Associate Church, involved in acceding to them. For these reasons, more particularly stated in the narrative above quoted, the protesters could not go along with their former brethren, and therefore with their people, adhering to the principles and the original constitution of the Associate Church, continued her existence when deserted by the majority of those who before belonged to her. By the good hand of God upon them, they have continued steadfastly to this day, in the same doctrine and worship, contending earnestly for the faith.

If there were good reasons for not deserting the principles of the Associate Church at that time, by joining in this Union, these have become now much stronger for maintaining a separate communion from that body, from the course which has been pursued by it since that time.

The united body assumed the designation of the Associate Reformed Church; uniting the titles of the united bodies. It was composed of ministers who had been members of the Associate Church, and a few that belonged to the Reformed Presbytery. Having laid aside the testimony of the Associate Church, at the

time of union, after various attempts to enact a constitution at length they adopted, with certain alterations, the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, as their constitution. These alterations extend only to the 3d section of the 23d chapter in the Confession, respecting the power of the civil magistrate, and one or two other verbal alterations. At the commencement of this Synod, they professed that "it was their real intention to carry with them all the judicial testimonies, against defection from the faith, emitted in the present age, by their brethren in Britain;" and "to avail themselves of every call to bear a pointed testimony against the errors and delusions which prevail in this country." This pledge has never been redeemed. They have no testimony, (other than the Westminster Confession) recognising the judicial testimonies emitted by the Secession or Reformed churches in Britain, against defections from that instrument, and though errors and delusions innumerable have risen up in these United States, even in churches which profess to receive these same Westminster standards; yet no testimony has been by her lifted up against them.

That she has herself adhered to the doctrines of her constitution, I think is praise to which she is justly entitled. For some time also she observed the former usages, and steadily practised restricted communion. Her numbers rapidly increased, and she gained no inconsiderable celebrity. Well, comparatively, had it been for her, and the cause of truth, had she so continued. But becoming numerous and popular, some of her ministers began to manifest symptoms of dissatisfaction with many of her usages, acted contrary to them, wrote against them, and attempted their abolition. The observance of fast and preaching days, in connection with the sacrament of the supper, close communion and the exclusive use of the Psalms of David, seem to have been greatly obnoxious to her leading men. Many imbibed the sentiments, and imitated the practices of these innovators, while others tenaciously adhered to the old way. This diversity of sentiment and practice, agitated for years their ecclesiastical assemblies, extended also to their congregations, and produced in both much discussion. This excitement was increased by permission to introduce the Dutch Psalms, and by abortive attempts to form a union with the Presbyterian and D. Reformed churches. Almost every year some new project was brought forward and discussed, till at last, instead of uniting with other societies, and diminishing the numbers of separate contending denominations, they were themselves shattered into fragments. One fragment was formed into the *Associate Reformed Synod* of the south; a

second into the *Associate Reformed Synod* of the west; and a third into the *Associate Reformed Synod* of the north. The latter formed the main body of the church, and was in possession of her funds and property. These, by a late union, formed by a majority of her delegates, representing, however, a minority of the church, have been transferred to the General Assembly. Those who protested against, and refused to join in this union, now constitute the Associate Reformed Synod of the north, and with their brethren of the south and west, are using exertions to recover the valuable library, which they have lost by the union referred to. But though the Synod of the north by the union with the Assembly, has got rid of a portion of her laxest members, the remainder continue nearly in their former state. They have still no testimony against prevailing evils. The principles of the Secession which were abandoned in the original act of union, have never yet been recognised. There are few Sabbaths in the year in which some of them do not sing Watts' Psalms, the Dutch Psalms and Hymns, and other human compositions. Some of her ministers are also in the practice of inviting all in good standing in other societies to a seat at the Lord's table, and they accept of the same invitation from others. They also exchange ministerial services with other societies on communion occasions, and join with other societies in the ordination of ministers. And still they are tolerated in so doing.

These are the very practices against which the compilers of the Westminster Confession protested—the very practices which the Independents wished them to sanction, and it seems impossible to vindicate those that follow them from the charge of inconsistency and schism. For if churches can fellowship one another for a time, why not always? If churches can thus fellowship one another in almost every public ordinance of religion, can there be a Scriptural ground to justify their remaining separate? It was supposed that the Associate Synod of the west reproached in principle and practice these usages of their brethren of the north; but the overture of last year to form a union between them, evinces that this supposition is utterly groundless.

A still more serious and perplexing difficulty arises respecting the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church. Both profess to accept of the interpretations of the Scriptures, given in their confession and hate schisms, and yet perhaps nearly the one half of her ministers preach tenets the very reverse of the doctrines they avow to be the doctrines of the word of the Lord. And the other half tolerate them, and the members submit to their ministrations. Is this consistent, honest and faithful?

"Buy the truth, and sell it not." "Cease from the instruction that causeth to err."

Respecting the Reformed Church it is unnecessary to say more than that while the Associate Church cannot adopt her views of civil magistracy, and the purchase of the common benefits of life; nor admit to her communion any who oppose the truth stated in her testimony on these points; so the Reformed Church cannot admit to her communion such as are opposed, as the Associate Church is, to her views on the same doctrines. Neither church, we believe, is prepared to relinquish her views, and without this a union between them would produce no greater unity of sentiment than there already is. And the constant jarring of opposite sentiments in the same body, would tend to less unity of affection than presently exists. No union which has not unity of sentiment for its basis, can ever be profitable, and all discussion, with a view to union, should be first directed to ascertain wherein they agree, and wherein they really differ. Through misapprehension of each others sentiments, differences are often thought to be greater than they really are. That the true point of difference between the Associate and Reformed Churches has not been ascertained by the latter body, is, I think, most certain, for the sentiments imputed by her to the Associate Church, in "Reformation Principles Exhibited," Chap. III. of the Historical View, are not, and never were held by that body.

For these numerous and painful divisions in the house of God, there ought to be great searchings of heart. In order to heal divisions that exist, as well as to prevent their farther extension, we can think of no better direction than to "love the TRUTH and the PEACE," and to love one another in the truth, and for the truth's sake. It is the Lord, and not men, that must gather the dispersed of Israel into one, that can give his people one heart and one way; and, according to the language of Prophecy, cause the watchman on Zion's walls to see eye to eye. "May the Lord hasten it in his time!"

Select Religious Intelligence.

SANCTIFICATION OF THE SABBATH.

A very general excitement has been and is still in operation in favour of taking measures for the external sanctification of the Sabbath. To everyfearer of God it is a most distressing fact, that this holy day is most awfully profaned throughout this land; and little—we may say nothing—has been done to check this dreadfully increasing evil. The laws of the state on this subject are wholly inefficient, and they become worse than useless by the fact, that the magistrate is not to be found who will carry them into effect. The arrival and departure of steam-boats and stages, as well as of river and

canal craft, of every description, the number of our cellars and grog-shops, which, under the name of places of refreshment, are open at all hours, and are the retreat of every species of idlers and dissolute persons, render our cities scenes of the most distressing profanation of God's holy day. To the reformation of these abuses has the attention of the public been turned; meetings of the different churches have been held; resolutions passed and committees appointed to carry them into effect; and yet we fear after all nothing, or next to nothing, will be done. Local exertions can effect but little; should one steam-boat or stage stop running on the Sabbath, others are ready to occupy their places, and thus the evil is undiminished. Till a proper feeling of reverence for this holy day pervades the country, general laws be enacted and rigidly enforced, and the open profaner feel that he suffers disgrace and loss of character in the eyes of fellow men, nothing effectual, we fear, will be done. Still the attempt is laudable, is an imperious duty. May the Lord give grace to persevere to enforce profession by consistent practice, and crown the effort with his blessing.

—♦— ANOTHER SPECIMEN OF UNITARIAN DECEPTION.

A writer in the Christian Mirror warns the churches against a little book which is exposed for sale in several places in York county, Me. with the following title page :

"The New-England Primer improved; or an easy and pleasant guide to the art of reading, to which is added the Catechism, adorned with cuts. By J. K. Remisch, 1827."

"The New-England Primer," it is well known, has been in common use in families for generations. This assumes the same title without notice of any change, except that it is "*improved*." It also professes to give the "Shorter Catechism," the well known title of the Assembly's Catechism for children. The first five questions and answers and some other portions are precisely in the words of the Assembly's. Some parts are altered, and other large portions wholly omitted; so as to leave out the doctrines of the Trinity, of decrees, of the entire sinfulness of human nature, the misery of our fallen estate, our desert of eternal misery, and God's eternal purpose to save some of our fallen race by a Redeemer.

This is another specimen of that deception which certain writers, even on religious subjects, are practising on the community. Let every sect publish its sentiments with the utmost freedom; but let them not assume a disguise to deceive the unwary.—*Ref. Dutch Magazine.*

THE CAROLINAS AND CANADAS.

We have received a letter from an esteemed correspondent complaining of an insinuation in the memoir of the Rev. James White, in our last number, relative to the unhealthiness of the climate in the Carolinas and Canada. "As it respects the former," he says, "no man of any candor or information will hazard the assertion. It is possible that one or at most two places may be so esteemed, but as it respects the district in which our churches are generally located, there is no climate preferable. What I object to is the throwing out insinuations of that kind. It is notorious that there is a prejudice existing against the southern climate, and that our vacancies have suffered on that account. Had any other section of our church been neglected, as that of the south has been, I doubt if any vestige would have remained till this day. It is only within a few years that attention has been paid to their interest, and every person knows how often they have been disappointed in receiving even the small portion of supply that has been allowed them, and all on account of the supposed unhealthiness of the place. It is exceedingly improper in any way to foster prejudices which already exist to the detriment of the church in the south, and I therefore regret that an insinuation calculated to do this, though very indirectly, I confess, and I hope unintentionally made, should be circulated through your magazine."

We cannot but approve the zeal and friendship of our correspondent in noticing any thing in our pages that may be thought to have an injurious tendency to the interest of any section of our church. Nothing can be farther from our intention, and we believe we may say the same thing respecting our contributors. Much would we regret, and we are confident would they, should any effect of this kind be produced. Of the truth of what our correspondent says, respecting the healthiness of the district, in which our churches are located, we have no doubt whatever; it accords fully with the accounts given by all with whom we have conversed, who have visited that country. But at the same time while we are satisfied that the writer of the memoir intended nothing prejudicial to the interests of the church in the south, we must also say, that if the passage alluded to by our correspondent be viewed in its connexion, we think it will not be liable to the exceptions made against it. We do not consider the writer as giving his own opinion of the Carolinas and the Canadas, but merely as stating that such was the devotedness of Mr. W^r. mind, that while yet in *Scotland*, and with the impressions on his mind formed there, where very incorrect ideas, respecting the climate of America, and especially of the south prevail, he was willing, and even purposed to devote himself to the ministry in those places, if he should be so appointed.

We beg leave also to state, which we can do from personal observation, as well as from the best of testimony, relative to the Canadas, that though there are spots in the neighbourhood of swampy grounds, where fever and ague prevails, as is common in all new countries, yet there is not in general a more healthy district in America, than that between Lakes Ontario and Erie and Lake Huron, where our small congregations are situated.—*Ed. R. M.*



FREEMASONRY.

As our papers for the last month furnish us with almost no intelligence which would interest our readers, we cheerfully occupy the place of this department for this month, and close our 4th volume, with some extracts from the speech of Mr. Crary, in the Senate of this State, on the 25th March, on the bill "to appoint a commissioner to investigate the facts relative to the abduction of William Morgan." Mr. C. was opposed to the bill from a conviction that nothing could be effected by it, that it was not called for by the people, seeing every thing that could be done in the way of investigation, has been done already by the Lewiston Committee, and that it would be viewed as a substitute for, and prevent the passing of a law called for by the people, to forbid and prevent the administration of extra-judicial oaths, on which the whole fabric of freemasonry depends. Mr. C's. argument goes to show, that such a law as this bill would operate to prevent, is imperiously called for, and that nothing less than the entire overthrow of the whole system of freemasonry is requisite to give due effect to our civil constitution and laws, and for the protection of the community against the slavery and bondage in which they are enthralled by the operations of a secret power, hitherto unsuspected. A spirit of opposition to this power is in active operation, and we fervently wish that wisdom and discretion may guide its movements, and that its efforts may be crowned with success. To ensure this, good character and purity of motive in those engaged in this work, is of vast importance. From this consideration alone the sentiments of Mr. C. are entitled to the greatest attention. They are the views not of a mere politician, who watches every movement of the popular breeze, and nicely trims his sails in order to waft himself into power; nor of a sycophant who fears the frown of an accepted mason, or courts the favour of any anti-masonic patron; but they are the sentiments of a man of talents and independent mind, who, in respect of unbending integrity and moral worth, has but few superiors; and who would not, for any consideration, utter a sentiment respecting masonry, or any other subject, which he did not believe. These remarks, which we know to be according to truth, are, in this region, wholly unnecessary, but we make them for the sake of our distant readers, and to counteract a sentiment industriously propagated by the friends of masonry, that this excitement

is kept up by political demagogues, for the advancement of their selfish ends. That some unprincipled men may endeavour to make use of this as they do of other things for this purpose, is not improbable, but that the allegation is true in general or beyond a few such instances, is most untrue. There is the most satisfactory evidence in fact, that it has nothing to do with political parties. We notice only farther that Mr. C. contemplates masonry solely in relation to civil matters—in its invisible, and therefore more powerful and dangerous encroachments on the rights and privileges of men as citizens, and under the protection of the laws. Considered in a religious point of view, with all its pretensions, it is still worse. It is the most hideous mass of ignorance, superstition, heaven-daring impiety and blasphemy, that can well be conceived.

Extracts from the Speech of Mr. Crary of Washington co. on the subject of Freemasonry.

Hitherto I have considered this question as between the freemasons, who were concerned either directly or indirectly in the abduction and murder of William Morgan, on the one hand ; and the people, contiguous to the place where the catastrophe happened, striving to bring the offenders to justice, on the other : But there is another view of the subject, compared to which the fate of William Morgan dwindles into a point. His cause has become that of the constitution and the law ; and in that view I shall now proceed to consider it.

When the future historian shall relate the fate of William Morgan—he will pause and enquire for the persons concerned : but when he is told the abduction was perpetrated in open day, in the populous, yet peaceful village of Batavia, and above all, when he is also told, the persons concerned have escaped detection—he cannot but exclaim, how impotent are human laws, and how inefficient the administration of justice, even in the most civilized part of the world. It cannot be denied, but that our system of jurisprudence is defective ; there is a power among us, it is a secret, invisible power, exerted by freemasons, which is above the law. While the order of freemasons did not pervert public justice ; or interfere to prevent the apprehension and conviction of offenders ; their pretended mysteries, though they sought concealment, excited no alarm.

The attribute of secrecy was accorded to the order, as a prerogative handed down from high antiquity and always claimed and exercised—the pretence for continuing and perpetuating freemasonry has been the security, protection and advantage, which it afforded to the traveller and the stranger : while it has been supposed the order did not interfere with the duties of the citizen, the politician, the statesman. Under such pretences, not contradicted by appearances, it has hitherto been viewed with complacency, its members respected and esteemed. And it was not until it was found that the obligations of the order, had alienated those belonging to it, from their allegiance to the constitution and the law, that the community began to suspect the imposition which had been practised upon them ; and exert the supremacy of their power to bring the kidnappers and murderers of Morgan to justice. On this occasion the people soon found their own impotence, and that of the laws, when exerted against freemasons, for the abduction and murder by them of one belonging to the order. It is this secret, invisible power to which I am opposed—a power exerted [in the midst of us ; from the horrible and tragical effects of which, neither friends nor foes, not even the wandering stranger, can escape.] * * * * *

That the order of freemasons has always required secrecy from those belonging to it, is a fact that cannot be questioned. If for that, they ought to be condemned, they will not complain that it is done without testimony. Let us then test the order by one of its cardinal principles, and see whether it is not at variance with truth and justice.

Openness and honesty form the criterion, by which the character of every transaction, relating to the affairs of men, is investigated and determined. Vice has always shunned the light.

The concealment of the fact is evidence, that the fact itself, if it appeared, would disclose something that is wrong. Thus, if a man be found with stolen goods in his possession, and he has concealed or attempts to conceal them, it is evidence that he received the goods, knowing that they were stolen. A person is examined on a charge of felony, and conceals the facts, and states what is not true : the conclusion is, that he is guilty. A party in a suit secretes a paper ; the conclusion is, that if it were produced, it would disclose some facts against him, which without it, do not appear : and thus it is, that secrecy and concealment have always been considered as tantamount to deceit and falsehood. It was so at the beginning ; for after eating the forbidden fruit, our first parents hid themselves from the presence of God.

[The speaker next proceeded to show, that, although the ostensible objects of freemasonry were *benevolence* and *kindness*, there was great reason to believe they were in reality, *selfishness* and *cruelty*. Names can never alter things.]

That which is not known to us, can never be guarded against by us. It is by deceit and falsehood, that distress and misery have been communicated and extended, far and wide, among the human race ; and if deceit and falsehood be not descriptive of freemasonry, they are of its effect and operation upon the rest of mankind.

To illustrate : A witness that is interested is incompetent to testify : a juror that has a bias upon his mind, is disqualified from sitting in judgment. But how can the one or the other be excluded, when the fact of such interest or bias is not known to the parties ? It may be said that the bias which one free-mason has in favor of another is slight and trifling ; admitted, and what follows ? Do we not know, that when all other things are equal, the least item inclines the scale ? and it is by the influence of these imperceptible trifles that every doubtful question is decided.

It has been said, that a man might as well be suspected, because he belonged to another church. But on what principle does the argument rest ? It must be on the assumption that there is no difference between Christianity and freemasonry ; and will that be pretended by the most devoted friend of the order ? It is sufficient for my purpose to mention one particular, about which there is no controversy : The obligation of secrecy is enjoined according to the order of freemasonry : while the Saviour at parting with his disciples, " said unto them, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature*.

The charge against freemasons is not that they are all bad men, or that they ought to be condemned, because there are some bad men among them : But it is, that the order justifies individuals belonging to it, who could not be justified by the laws of society. The conclusion, therefore, is against the order, not the individuals belonging to it. The individuals may be good or bad, like other men ; their character must depend upon their walk and conversation. It will not be pretended that individuals belonging to any society, are for that reason to be justified for any thing they may do. The objection is, that the members of the masonic society are not made amenable to justice like other men. It is not that every freemason shall be condemned, because he is a freemason ; but that the order screens men from punishment because they are members of it. No matter who subverts public justice, it is an offence which deserves reprobation and punishment.

But it may be asked, what has the order done ?

I answer, *it has justified the KIDNAPPERS and MURDERERS of William Morgan.*

This is a serious charge ; but it is believed to be supported by the best evidence, the nature of the case will admit. When the conduct of men cannot be reconciled with their innocence, the conclusion is that they are guilty.

The sense of right and wrong is impressed by Deity himself upon the heart of man. The effect of this impression will naturally appear at the recital of wrongs : and when it does not, the conclusion is that natural feelings are suppressed.

The story of William Morgan is the most tragical, and calculated the most

effectually to harrow up all our feelings, and excite all our sensibilities ; and even to impel us by an impulse not our own, to seek the place of the martyr's sufferings and death ; and there avenge his most foul and unnatural murder. But has the story had that effect upon those belonging to the masonic order ?

[Here the speaker adverted to the many falsehoods put in circulation by the fraternity in order to blind the public mind respecting the fate of Morgan ; and showed also that masons enjoyed the offices of honour and profit, though they professed to take no part in politics, and though the aggregate number bore a small proportion to the great body of the community, which we regret our limits compel us to omit.]

But let us not deceive ourselves : it is with rank and fashion, with power and wealth that we have to contend ; and in such a contest it is not to be expected that the selfish, the sycophantic, the slavish, will ever embark ; yet the cause is worthy of freemen, impelled by the force of principle, and the sense of injury, and such only will engage. The exclusive privileges of individuals, with the prerogative of power has held millions in bondage. Men, not knowing that they were born free, and possessed of certain equal and unalienable rights, might content themselves to linger out a miserable existence in servitude and chains. If we were of that degraded and degenerate race, freemasonry might triumph here as it has done in the old world, and in the darkest ages. But as we are freemen, with the gift of reason, and a knowledge of our own rights, can our friends expect, or our enemies require, that we should countenance an institution founded in error ? But the question still recurs, is it so ?

As we hold the affirmative, let us advert for a moment to the mode of initiation, and the manner of conferring degrees, both of which have now become public.

The candidate presents himself blindfolded and naked, with the cable tow about his neck, without any previous knowledge of what he is to do, or what is to be required of him ; and in this helpless condition, the dreadful oath is administered and taken. If the candidate should falter or hesitate, the ruffians on each side of him, holding the cable tow, which is about his neck, can in a moment tighten the cord, and extinguish him and his complaints forever : And how many noble spirits, preferring death to degradation, have been thus despatched, the world can never know ! Is this true ? If it is not, it can be shown to be false by disclosing the fact. If it should be said that this would destroy the order, by revealing the mystery, it then follows, that the secrets of freemasonry are with the order itself a consideration paramount to the reputation of those belonging to it. If then they can live by freemasonry, we must try to live without it ; and judge of it, as we do of other things, from what we know.

It is not to be questioned that worthy men have thus, by duress and imprisonment, become freemasons ; and from the fact that many have withdrawn themselves, and for years declined associating with the order, it is evident that freemasonry is hell in derision by many, and the better part, of those belonging to the order. Hence it is, that the most corrupt institution is kept up and continued by the worst of men : And from such continuance, what is to be expected ? Surely, if there be any antidote, it must be poison, if any remedy, it must be death.

For the violation of the masonic oath, the most dreadful punishment is invoked : and every subsequent degree not only imposes new and additional obligations ; but is a repetition of all the preceding ones. Hence it is that the compunctions visitings of conscience, if any, are stifled by the vile oath of profanity, taken by every member of the order : They cannot repent, because they dare not confess. Whatever crimes are perpetrated, the conclusion is and must be by the perpetrators, that they had better go on, than go back. Thus poor human nature is perverted, and left without the power of repentance, or hope of redemption.

If I am right in the view that I have taken of freemasonry, it is wrong in principle as well as in practice. Various other views might be suggested, but I forbear. If I am right, enough has already been said ; if I am wrong, nothing that I could add, would be of any avail.

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**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

We have received another communication as the first part of a more extended answer to the query of a "Constant Reader," with which we shall commence our next volume. A paper on "Trying Providences," and "on the controversy relating to the purchase of the common benefits of life," are also necessarily deferred.

Ecclesiastical Chronicle.

PRESBYTERY OF CAMBRIDGE.—The Associate Presbytery of Cambridge met on Wednesday the 7th inst. A call from the united congregations of Mercersburg and McConnelsburg, for Mr. Finlay W. McNaughtan, forwarded from the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and a call from the Associate Congregation of Bovina were presented, the former of which he accepted. Mr. Mitchell a preacher from the United Secession Church in Scotland was received on his adherence to the principles of this Church. A call from the Associate Congregation of Putnam for the Rev. Alexander Gordon was sustained and being presented, was accepted.

